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CHURCH OF ENGLAND *and* THE HOLY SEE



"There can be no fulfilment of the Divine Purpose in any scheme of reunion which does not ultimately include the great Latin Church of the West."

—*Lambeth Conference Report, 1930, p. 131.*

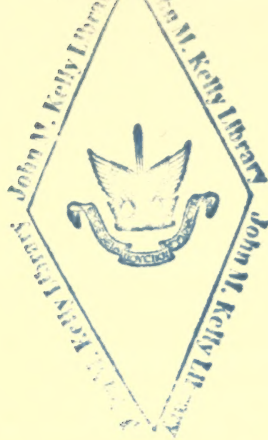
TRACTATE No. VI

WHAT DO ENGLISH DIVINES SAY?

By the Reverend L. F. SIMMONDS, M.A.

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NUMBER SIX.

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NOTE.

This title is interpreted in the widest sense to cover all the relations of the post-Reformation Church of England with the Holy See from 1588 to 1833.

L. F. S.

What do English Divines Say?

I. INTRODUCTORY.

The purpose of previous Tractates in this series has been to show that the Pre-Reformation Church of England willingly accepted the Papal Supremacy and Jurisdiction; and that the disastrous breach of the sixteenth century, engineered by material force against the Church's will, was in no sense a rebellion against the purely spiritual power claimed by the Successor of St. Peter.

But that visible breach has brought us now, in our survey of the relations of the Church of England with the Holy See, to an entirely different phase. The Elizabethan Settlement is an accomplished fact. Two outwardly separated communions face each other across that most hardly-passed of all boundaries—a river of the blood of martyrs. The Church of England has passed through a stage of chaos into a new and apparently settled, if far from peaceful, phase of her existence. The temporal claims of Popes, especially that of the right to depose monarchs, have been all-important in men's minds. Now in a more peaceful spirit they can at last be turned to the consideration of the effects of the events of the sixteenth century upon the Anglican attitude to their spiritual powers.

This is not to say, of course, that the matter was any more the subject of, so to say, official ecclesiastical debate than it had been before. But in the clearer atmosphere, there were some men including many dignitaries and statesmen who considered the question on its merits, and who increasingly as time went on longed for Reunion with Rome, now herself 'reformed' by the Council of Trent and free from evil-living and worldly Popes. Consequently it is a fact that the Church of England from the sixteenth century has never been without a party of Reunionists. The purpose of this Tractate is to provide a brief history of this undying desire for Reunion running through the story of the Anglican Communion down to the time of the Oxford Movement (which will be dealt with in the next Tractate). It will show that whatever startling admissions as to the Papal claims were made by the Tractarians and their disciples and are

reiterated by the hundreds of priests who support the position of the Council for Promoting Catholic Unity to-day, they have their counterpart in the writings of Anglican theologians of every generation, among whom are Bishops and Primates of universal reputation and of undoubted loyalty to the Church of England. Their writings were probably read by few of their contemporaries, and their opinions abused by many who made no effort to understand them. In fact, they were probably as unpopular as their followers are to-day. Yet the names of Bramhall and Thorndike, to name but two, are now venerated, although their teachings are neglected. I cannot forbear from recording the fact that when I consulted their works in the Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology, from the shelves of one of the greatest ecclesiastical libraries in England, where they had reposed for generations, I had to cut the pages !

This Tractate should show, then, that the Movement for Reunion with Rome is neither of modern creation nor merely observing its centenary. The Oxford Movement, in fact, was a phase of a greater movement which is contemporaneous with the existence of the Church of England as a part of the Catholic body separated from the Holy See. It was a mighty quickening of an existent life, the growth of the seed patiently sown, often amid persecution and distress, since the sixteenth century. And while tares grow among this wheat even now, it is only until the harvest.

II. EFFORTS TOWARDS REUNION BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR.

We may best begin our survey of the Post-Reformation Church at the year 1588 with the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Political fears began to be quietened, and at the same time the rise of Richard Hooker and his school delivered the Church from the more insidious danger of Calvinism. Persecution grew less and, as was always the case when this happened, desire for Reunion began openly to be expressed. The change of spirit is, as it were, personified in the saintly life of Launcelot Andrewes (1555—1626), Bishop successively of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester. With a vivid remembrance of the troubles through which he had passed, we might not expect him to have any very affectionate feelings towards Rome and it is all the more significant to find so soon after the breach that he looked forward to the restoration of Catholic Unity. So soon was it clear to saintly and learned men that the Church of England must not attempt to make herself a Church forever isolated but must strive for a speedy and honourable return to visible unity with the Apostolic See. So we find in his prayers for Sunday, "O may the heart and soul of them that believe be one"; and on Mondays he prayed more specifically

" for the Catholic Church
its confirmation and increase
Eastern
its deliverance and union
Western
its re-adjustment and pacification."¹

Such a spirit was encouraged by King James I, who in the year of his accession (1603) said in a speech before Parliament: "I acknowledge the Church of Rome to be our Mother Church"; and again in his Premonition to all Christian Monarchs: "Patriarchs, I know, were in the time of the Primitive Church, and I likewise reverence that institution for order sake: And for myself (if that were the question) I would with all my heart give my consent that the Bishop of Rome should have the first seat: I being a Western King would go with the Patriarch of the West. And for his temporal principality over the Signory

¹ *Preces Privatae.*

of Rome, I do not quarrel it neither; let him in God's name be *Primus Episcopus inter omnes Episcopos* and *Princeps Episcoporum*; so it be no otherwise but as Peter was *Princeps Apostolorum*."² It is significant to notice also what he said concerning the Oath of Allegiance: "The lower House of Parliament at the framing of this Oath made it to contain, That the Pope hath no power to excommunicate me: which I caused them to reform, only making it to conclude: That no Excommunication of the Popes can warrant my subjects to practice against my Person or State; denying the Deposition of Kings to be in the Pope's lawful power; as indeed I take any such temporal violence to be far without the limits of such a spiritual power as excommunication is."³ Could any passage make plainer the fact that representative Anglicans in the seventeenth century, even the King himself, had no quarrel with the *spiritual* claims of Rome, but only with those exaggerated temporal claims which have long since passed away? To this most important point, we shall return later when we come to English Divines who dealt particularly with it. It was in accordance with this position that James "wrote to (Pope) Paul V offering to recognize his spiritual primacy and to re-unite the English Church to Rome on condition only of his disclaiming political sovereignty over kings. The offer was promptly and peremptorily rejected."⁴ Thirty years later Cardinal Barberini told Hamilton, Charles I's envoy at Rome, that "had not the unfortunate Gunpowder Plot broken out a little before Urban was sent Nuncio into France, he had private orders to treat with King James by the mutual consent of His Holiness then sitting and that prince: finally, though that execrable plot alienated King James from the Roman Catholic interest, yet Urban's endeavours, while he was Nuncio, were extremely well taken by His Majesty."⁵

"That execrable plot" did indeed hinder all outward approaches throughout the rest of James I's reign. But it did not hinder the growth of desire for unity in many noble minds, and in 1632 Fr. Leander de St. Martino, an English Benedictine and Chaplain of the Queen, was able to write: "Reunion seemeth possible enough if the point were discussed in an assembly of moderate men, without contention or desire of victory, but out

² *Essay towards a Proposal for Catholic Communion by a Minister of the Church of England* (1704) printed at large and answered, N. Spinckes, London, 1705, pp. 40-1. Cf. also Herbert Thorndike, *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), vol. v, p. 30, note f.

³ *ibid.* The quotations are from the *Apology for the Oath of Allegiance*, English edition, 1609.

⁴ In a letter from M. Puyssieux to the French Ambassador at Rome, dated July 12th, 1609. See G. J. Slosser, *Christian Unity*, Kegan Paul, 1929, p. 108.

⁵ J. Berington, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Catholic Religion in England*, including the Memoirs of Panzani, 1813, p. 254.

of a sincere desire of Christian union."⁶ So general was this opinion among competent judges that in 1634 Gregory Panzani of Arrezo, a secular priest, was sent by Pope Urban VIII to discover "the true state of affairs among the Catholics and to feel the pulse of the nation with regard to other concerns."⁷ He was received by the Queen and entered into discussions with Secretaries of State concerning measures for the relief of Catholics and possibilities of the re-union of the English Church with the Holy See.

Fortunately for us, Panzani's work, conversations and correspondence are known to us through his own Memoirs, which are worthy of careful reading, although it is only possible to give short extracts from them here. A few comments on them are perhaps necessary to avoid misunderstanding. Any reader of the Memoirs must be struck by the sincerity and single-mindedness which is shown in them. There can be little doubt that Panzani faithfully recorded what he believed to be true and what he was told. At the same time, one cannot but believe that some of those who spoke with him were somewhat deceived by their own hopes—though certainly of good faith. But while we may allow for some exaggerations, that does not affect the main point at issue, that at this time many — Bishops, priests and laity alike — were looking forward to Reunion with Rome.

First, as to the attitude of the King and his Court, Panzani in a letter to Cardinal Barberini, the Pope's nephew, on February 16th, 1635, writes that Charles I having listened to a sermon on the subject of schism, said "that he would willingly have parted with one of his hands, rather than such a schism should ever have happened," and straightway fell into a panegyric on Urban VIII, leaving no doubt in the minds of his hearers that he was referring to the schism with Rome.⁸ He adds "that the king's preachers often took occasion to run into the praises of the moderate Papists, that they recommended the use of auricular confession, extolled the beautifying and adorning of Churches, (etc.) . . . that they disclaimed many popular calumnies fixed on the Church of Rome, owning her to be the Mother Church, and author of happiness to many nations . . . and many, in common conversation, wished for a re-union."⁹

Sir Francis Windebank, a Secretary of State, said to Panzani, "If we had neither Jesuits nor Puritans in England, I am confident an union might easily be effected." "As for Jesuits," replied Panzani, "though they have always been regarded as a learned body and very serviceable to the Church

⁶ *Instructions for Reconciliation*, p. 208, State Papers. Cf. W. H. Hutton, *History of the English Church from the Accession of Charles I to the death of Anne*, p. 45.

⁷ Berington, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁸ *ibid.*, p. 135.

⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 138-9.

of Rome, yet it is not improbable but His Holiness would sacrifice their interest, on the prospect of so fair an acquisition." Windebank assured him that "all moderate men in Church and State thirsted after reunion."¹⁰

Sir Francis Cottington, another Secretary of State, used to take off his hat reverently whenever the Pope's name was mentioned, so Panzani tells us, and once said to him, "I beg of you never let us mention the scandals and calamities of those times (i.e., of Henry VIII) of which all thinking men still retain a fresh idea. I only wish that the king could be fully convinced, that the see of Rome has a real affection for him. I do indeed observe a great alteration in the enemies of the Church of Rome. Formerly the word Rome could not be pronounced without horror and detestation: but now we are grown more mannerly."¹¹

"Among the laity," says Panzani, "none thirsted more for this union than the Earl of Arundel, who proposed liberty of conscience as the first step toward it, and that no demand, on the other hand, should be made of the Church lands."¹²

In 1635, Fr. Philip, the Queen's Confessor, reported to Barberini, "That the King and several of his ministry were far from being adverse to an union: that it was an undertaking of the most dangerous consequence, on account of the many and severe edicts that were in force against the Roman Catholic religion: that those who were most favorably inclined to the Catholic cause were frequently obliged to give proofs of their zeal to the contrary for fear of notice: in which case it was difficult to form a just idea of their real sentiments seeing they found themselves under a necessity of varying from themselves, and acting incoherently. For instance, when there was any pressing occasion for money, the King was obliged, contrary to his inclination, to let the laws loose against the Roman Catholics, otherwise the puritanical House of Commons would make no progress in the money bills, for the government not being arbitrary, no extraordinary levies would be granted without the people's consent. That the Bishops in like manner (though several of them were disposed to enter into a correspondence with Rome) when their temporalities were threatened by the puritanical members (as they had been frequently of late) went into the same persecuting methods: that such a conduct as this had so much of contradiction in it, that it was altogether unintelligible to those who were not perfectly acquainted with the infirmities of human nature, and particularly with the irresolution of these islanders. Yet, after all, if Windebank's project of a reciprocal agency could be set on foot, there might be some hopes of a reunion."¹³

¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 163-4.

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 200-1.

¹² *ibid.*, p. 249.

¹³ *ibid.*, pp. 186-7.

Thus it is plain enough that there was a strong undercurrent of feeling in favour of reunion among courtiers and ecclesiastics. If one is inclined to condemn them for cowardliness in hiding their real views from the public, let it be remembered that not all men have the heroic fortitude of martyrs. And moreover, a premature declaration of their intention was more likely to do harm than good. It would have provoked the Puritan Rebellion against Church and Monarchy at once. The best way to achieve their hopes was by a gradual preparing of the way. The fact that the Revolution eventually destroyed their patient work was not their fault, for it came mainly through other causes.

The progress that was being made was welcomed at Rome, where Cardinal Barberini received detailed reports of all that was going on. On October 20th, 1635, he wrote to Mazarin, then papal nuncio in France :—

“The conduct of that kingdom (England) is, of late, very much altered in regard to Catholics. They have now both fair words and good looks, who not long ago were continually frowned upon. . . . I am not able to answer the compliments you make me as to the prospect of re-uniting that kingdom : but I refuse not the congratulation as to the issue hoped for from the mutual agents we are going to establish between the two courts. . . . Nor shall I hesitate to rob Rome of her most valuable ornaments if in exchange we might be so happy as to have the King of England’s name stand among those princes who submit themselves to the Apostolic See. . . . At the same time, I flatter myself, it will be no hard task for Urban VIII to make King Charles sensible that he seeks neither interest nor convenience but solely the good of his soul in the correspondence he would establish. All I can do is to desire the conversion of that kingdom where my power can do so little, and where my sins, perhaps, are an obstacle to it. However, willingly, I would part with my life and substance in so glorious a cause.”¹⁴

Again, on December 10th, 1635, he wrote to Panzani : “I daily see manifest tokens of the good inclinations of His Holiness towards His Britannic Majesty : he expresses not in words only but with tears, how much he desires to renew the same good understanding which his predecessors for so many ages maintained with the Roman See. I constantly impart to him the contents of our letters : and he as often embraces His Majesty at a distance.”¹⁵

These statements, and there are many like them, are of particular value in our study of these negotiations inasmuch as they reveal a spirit in the Papal Court also of a will to unity. It is clear that this spirit persisted while the House of Stuart yet reigned, and it was only with the coming of a foreign Protestant dynasty that friendly relations ceased.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 194-5.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 203.

With this background of the relations between the two courts in our minds, we may now consider the response of the Anglican clergy to Panzani's mission. This is seen mostly in the correspondence and conversations which he had with Dr. Richard Montague, Bishop of Chichester, who had already been impeached in the Commons (but not in the House of Lords) for his book "Appelo Caesarem," in which already he had endeavoured to state a case which would reconcile England to the Holy See. Naturally he arranged a meeting with Panzani and "signified a great desire that the breach between the two Churches might be made up, and apprehended no danger from publishing the scheme as things now stood. He said he had frequently made it the subject of his most serious thoughts, and had diligently considered all the requisites of an union, adding that he was satisfied both the Archbishops, with the Bishop of London and several others of the episcopal order, besides a great number of the learned inferior clergy, were prepared to fall in with the Church of Rome as to a supremacy *purely spiritual*: and that there was no other method of ending controversies than by having recourse to some centre of ecclesiastical unity."¹⁶ He promised to take the first opportunity to discourse the Primate (Laud) on the subject, "but insinuated that he was a cautious man, who would make no advances unless he were well protected."¹⁷

When Barberini heard of this conference he wrote that "it was a great subject of joy to understand that several of the Protestant Bishops and clergy were ready to join with the Universal Church in the article of a spiritual supremacy, and to hearken to an accommodation as to particular matters."¹⁸ Montague was urged to continue the good work he had begun. "At present," wrote the Cardinal, "it would be most advisable to dwell upon generals: and especially the Protestant Bishops and clergy ought to examine the motives which first occasioned the breach with Rome, which being found human and unwarrantable, it would be their duty to come forward and sue for a reconciliation. . . . They might assure themselves, the Bishop of Rome would make no unreasonable demands, but content himself with the essentials of his primacy, and such privileges as were annexed to it *jure divino*."¹⁹ Panzani was told to enquire into the characters of the Protestant Bishops since they were to be employed in the projected scheme of reunion. He was to discourage the discussion of particular points, and to concentrate first on the question of authority and doctrinal points. "As there were many positive laws or practices out of the limits of the *jus divinum* which were disagreeable to the English nation, as it was in the power of the Church to alter them, so they should meet with all the tenderness

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 238.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 239.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 239.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 240.

imaginable, and such mitigations as the cause would bear upon a fair representation.”²⁰

At a second meeting, Montague said that “he was continually employed in disposing men’s minds for it (union), both by words and writing, as often as he met with an opportunity. He then again mentioned the Pope’s supremacy, whose feet, he said, he was willing to kiss and acknowledge himself to be one of his children. He added that the Archbishop of Canterbury was entirely of his sentiment, but with a great alloy of fear and caution.”²¹ Panzani said that he aimed at a total union, “not only politic and ceremonial, but real and *in unitate fidei*, without any mixture of creeds.”²² “From the whole,” says Panzani, “it was pretty plain that there was a great inclination in many of the eminent Protestant clergy to reunite themselves to the See of Rome.”²³

When Montague met Panzani again he assured him that “there were only three bishops that could be counted violently bent against the see of Rome, viz., Durham, Salisbury and Exeter: the rest, he said, were very moderate.”²⁴ The bishop spoke of the king’s desire to keep correspondence with Rome by sending and receiving ambassadors: and he added “that if His Majesty should think fit to settle such a correspondence, he would himself make interest for that honourable charge. ‘Then,’ replied Panzani, ‘the world would immediately conclude that you were going over to the Church of Rome.’ ‘And what harm would there be in that?’ said the Bishop.”²⁵

Panzani expressed some despondency as to the progress that was being made towards reunion. “Well,” said Montague, “had you been acquainted with this nation ten years ago, you might have observed such an alteration in the language and inclinations of the people, that it would not only put you in hopes of an union, but you would conclude it was near at hand.” He solemnly declared that both he and many of his brethren were prepared to conform themselves to the methods and discipline of the Gallican Church, where the civil rights were well guarded: “and as for the aversion we discover in our sermons and printed books,” he added, “they are things of form, chiefly to humour the populace and not to be much regarded.”²⁶

Panzani’s work came to an end in 1636, when the immediate purpose of his mission was achieved by the appointment of Hamilton as the King’s agent at the Vatican and Conn as Papal agent at the Court. Appreciation of his labours was shown by

²⁰ *ibid.*, p. 241.

²¹ *ibid.*, pp. 241-2.

²² *ibid.*, p. 242.

²³ *ibid.*, p. 243.

²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 246.

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 247.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 248.

his immediate appointment as Canon of the rich Church of S. Laurence in Damaso, and later he became Bishop of Mileto.²⁷

Before we leave the subject of these negotiations, it is necessary to consider the position of Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. Was he really so ready to make terms with Rome as Montague and Panzani thought? Or was his position rather that revealed in the disputation with Fisher the Jesuit? None can answer better than Heylyn, his biographer and devoted friend. And he writes: "It was the petulancy of the Puritans on the one hand and the pragmatism of the Jesuits on the other which made the breach wider than at first: and had these hot spirits on both sides been calmed a little, moderate men might possibly have agreed upon such equal terms as would have laid a sure foundation for the peace of Christendom."²⁸ If these are the thoughts of Laud by the pen of Heylyn, as they probably are, then perhaps after all Montague was not so far wrong when he claimed Laud as mainly on his side, "though with a great allay of fear and caution"; and had a few more years of peace remained to England before the struggle of the Parliament against the King began, it is possible that our appreciation of Laud's position would be very different, and even that he might have changed the course of the Church's history. But at the departure of Panzani already the threatenings of coming trouble turned the energies of King and Court into another channel, and with the outbreak of Civil War in 1642 and the temporary triumph of a militant Protestantism, negotiations with Rome were suspended for eighteen years.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 257.

²⁸ *Cyprianus Anglicus*, p. 388.

III. THE RESTORATION.

At the Restoration in 1660, Charles II was anxious to grant complete toleration to Roman Catholics, and made direct though secret efforts for reunion. Such a thing would have been beyond the bounds of possibility had it not been that he was supported by a considerable pro-Roman party in the Church of England. The history, therefore, of Charles II's efforts is in itself evidence of that Reunionist thread in the Anglican Communion which we are endeavouring to trace, and must be considered briefly before we pass to the evidence of the writings of prominent Divines of the period. Lest the value of this evidence should be undermined by the theory that the King was secretly a Roman Catholic, it should be stated at once that such an opinion is without any true foundation of fact. There is no space to consider the matter in detail, and we must be content with the comment of Ranke on the letter which Pope Innocent XI wrote, on June 7th, 1635, on James II's announcement of his brother's death-bed submission: "We see with what caution the head of the Catholic Church even then expresses himself as to this (death-bed) conversion: there is no doubt that in Rome nothing was known of a confession previously made, or of any such dissimulation throughout his reign. The account of the conversion seems to have been unexpected there."²⁹

From the first, the king wished to appoint a Bishop who should receive ecclesiastical institution from Rome and spiritual authorisation from the Pope, and the suggestions for reunion which were made in 1663 and presented to the Pope,³⁰ whether known to Charles or not, entirely represented his mind. That plan was for a Uniate Church. On doctrine there was a complete acceptance of Roman standards, which presented no difficulty to the authors, but in discipline many concessions were asked for. "The Archbishop of Canterbury was to be raised to the dignity of Patriarch of the three realms: in his hands the administration of the Church in them all was to be vested, excepting only a few

²⁹ Ranke, *History of England principally in the 17th Century*, Clarendon Press, 1875, vol. iii, p. 397. Ranke gives other reasons for rejecting the idea of a previous conversion, pp. 395 et seq.

³⁰ *Oblatio ex parte Caroli II Magn. Britanniae regis pro optatissima trium suorum regnorum cum sede apostolica Romana unione*. February, 1663. In the Archives at Paris: Angleterre, No. 81.

reserved rights of the Apostolic See. . . . The existing bishops and archbishops were to remain, but they were to be reconsecrated by three apostolic legates specially appointed for this duty alone. A Roman legate was to reside in Great Britain, to exercise merely the reserved rights secured to the Pope. . . . Together with the privileges of the Church, the right of the King to nominate to the episcopal sees, and the rights of property in the Church estates formerly sold were secured. Above all, neither the present nor any future English king was to be forced to treat harshly those of his subjects who at the risk of their souls wished to remain in the Protestant faith. They were to enjoy the free exercise of their religion, though at their own expense. They were to be reclaimed if possible by good teaching alone, without the least coercion. The bishops and clergy who accept Catholic ordination are not merely to retain their benefices, but even to keep their wives: celibacy was not to be introduced till later. The Eucharist was to be administered in both kinds to those who wished it: the Mass was to be celebrated in Latin, but accompanied with English hymns. . . . Some of the orders were to be revived, the Benedictines of St. Maur for psalmody, others on account of their secluded life, others for the care of the sick, even the Jesuit fathers for the schools; but all were to be subject to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and to avoid the faults which their friends censured in them. The most disputed questions, as to the infallibility of the Pope, his superiority over councils, his right to depose kings, were not to be discussed either in the pulpit, or in printed writings, or in any other way."³¹ In connection with the last-mentioned subject, however, it is to be noted that the decrees of the Council of Trent were accepted. There is little doubt that the authors of this remarkable plan had great hopes of restoring the Episcopal hierarchy to communion with Rome. Their identity is unknown, but it is apparent that some, at least, were ecclesiastics who knew very accurately the mind of the king. Among them, probably, were some of those whose writings we shall consider presently.

Charles II had had direct communications with Pope Innocent X before the initiation of this scheme, and later similar negotiations were opened with Alexander VII.³² Again, it is obvious that the Stuarts found a ready and sympathetic ear in the Papal Court. There seems little doubt that Charles II, in his more sober moments, desired reunion with Rome purely for spiritual reasons—political attractions having far less weight with him than with his father and grandfather. And as we shall see, the same desire was shared by many prominent divines of the Church of England, as well as numbers of the inferior clergy.

³¹ Ranke, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, pp. 398-9.

³² *ibid.*, p. 396.

IV. THE CAROLINE DIVINES.

In this section, I propose to give quotations from the writings of the Caroline Divines, as far as possible without comment.

HEYLYN, the friend of Laud, who died in 1662, wrote in the Introduction to "*Cyprianus Anglicus*" just before his death: "In many of which (disputes) it might be found no difficult matter to atone the differences, whensoever it shall please God to commit the managing of them to moderate and prudent men, who prefer truth before opinion, and peace before the prevalency of their several parties. But whether it be so in all is a harder question and will remain a question to the end of the world unless all parties lay aside their private interest and conscientiously resolve to yield as much to another as may stand with Piety. And then what reason can there be why the breaches in the walls of Jerusalem should not be made up? and being made up, why Jerusalem should not be restored to its former Honour of being a city at unity within itself?"³³

HERBERT THORNDIKE (1598—1672) was a Prebendary of Westminster Abbey, where he is buried in the East Cloister.

He argues for Rome's pre-eminence over the whole Church on the grounds of the greatness of that city: yet not as if that greatness were accidental, but for that reason deliberately chosen by SS. Peter and Paul for the centre of unity.

"(The reader) will find it consequent to the ground of this design, not that the Church of Rome should be sovereign over the Churches of these cities (Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria) . . . but that it should have that eminence over them, and by consequence, much more of the Churches of inferior cities, as is requisite to the directing of such matters as might come to be of common interesse to the whole Church, to such an agreement as might preserve the unity thereof, with advantage to the common Christianity."³⁴

"It follows of reason that St. Peter for the Jews and St. Paul for the Gentiles (at least principally) should make it their business to plant Christianity and to found the Church of Rome: and that the eminence of these Apostles (one chief by Our Lord's

³³ *Introduction to Cyprianus Anglicus*, pp. 39-40. Quoted by S. L. Ollard, *Reunion*, pp. 15-16.

³⁴ Herbert Thorndike, *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), vol. iv, p. 406.

choice, the other eminent for his labours) may very well be alleged for the privileges of that Church.”³⁵

He claims that Rome is given no *absolute* jurisdiction over other Churches, that is, in the sense that she can interfere in purely local matters which do not concern the unity and well-being of the whole.

“But,” he continues “(its position) makes the Church of Rome, as other head Churches, the centre to which the causes that concern, first the Western Churches in particular, then the *whole*, are to resort that they may find issue and be decided by the consent and to the unity of all whom they concern.”³⁶

“These fathers” (St. Cyprian, Pacianus, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and Optatus) . . . “suppose the Church to be a body compacted of all Churches (ruled by the same form of government for the preserving of unity in the whole): as the college of the Apostles consisteth of so many persons endowed all with one and the same power, for whom one answers, to signify the unity of the whole. Whereby it appeareth that *Our Lord, speaking to him (St. Peter) alone, signifies thereby the course which he hath established for preserving unity in the Church: to wit, that all Churches being governed in the same form, the greater go before the less in ordering matters of common concernment.*”³⁷

Thorndike admits that General Councils have their authority from recognition by the Church of Rome. “One particular I must insist upon for the eminence of it. I have already mentioned the general councils: whereof how many can be counted general by number of present votes? *The authority of them, then, must arise from the admitting of them by the Western Churches. And this admission, what can it be ascribed to but the authority of the Church of Rome, eminently involved above all the Churches of the West in the summoning and holding of them and by consequence in their decrees?*

And, indeed, in the troubles that passed between the East and the West from the Council of Nicaea, though the Western Churches have acted by their representatives upon eminent occasions in great councils, in other occasions they may justly seem to refer themselves to that Church as resolving to regulate themselves by the acts of it: so that St. Jerome might very well name Rome and the West as the same party in his 77th Epistle. So St. Basil calls the Church of Rome *δυτικῶν κορυφαῖον* “the crown of the west,” and St. Augustine supposes Innocent, being over the Church of Rome, to be over the whole Church.”³⁸

“It will be unquestionable that all causes that concern the whole Church are to resort to it.”³⁹

³⁵ *ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 407.

³⁶ *ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 410.

³⁷ *ibid.*, vol. iv, pp. 414-5.

³⁸ *ibid.*, vol. iv, pp. 440-1.

³⁹ *ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 443.

"The canons thereof (i.e. of Sardica), whereby appeals to the Pope in the causes of bishops are settled (whether for the West, which it represented, or for the whole, which it had right to conclude, not having caused the breach) shall I conceive to be forged because they are so aspersed: having been acknowledged by Justinian, translated by the Dionysius Exiguus, added by the Eastern Church to their Canon Law? Or shall I not ask, what pretence there could be to settle appeals from other parts to Rome, rather than from Rome to other parts, had not a *pre-eminence of power and not only a precedence of rank*, been acknowledged originally in the Church of Rome."⁴⁰

"For the act or the acts of Our Lord upon which the Church is founded, I allege, the power of the keys, described by the effect of 'binding and loosing,' and to that effect granted to St. Peter: to the disciples assembled after the Resurrection, in the terms of 'remitting and retaining sin': to the Church in the same terms as to St. Peter—to the effect of rendering him that obeys not 'a heathen man and a publican' to him that would be a Christian. Here you have a certain power, deposited with certain persons: the effect whereof is visible in the succession of persons deriving the authority which they claim, from the visible act of those persons which are here trusted with it: and in the maintenance of visible communion among Christians by excluding the false. . . . There is as great a consent of Christians in the visible unity of the Church as in the truth of Christianity, saving this difference: that all Christians, good and bad, true and false, agree in the truth of Christianity: only those that are neither heretical nor schismatics in the unity of the Church."⁴¹

"I have shewed that the Church of Rome hath and ought to have, when it shall please to hear reason, a regular pre-eminence over the rest of Christendom in these western parts. And he that is able to judge and willing to consider shall find that pre-eminence the only reasonable means to preserve so great a body in unity. And therefore I count not myself tied to justify Henry VIII in disclaiming all such pre-eminence."⁴²

"How should we depart from unity with that Church the authority whereof we follow in the change which we make? If therefore we are to 'be without offence to Jews and Gentiles and to the Churches of God' as S. Paul commands: then are we to be without offence to the Church of Rome."⁴³

"(The Pope) being so acknowledged (as Patriarch of the West) by King James of excellent memory in his letter to the Cardinal of Perron, may justly charge them to be the cause of dividing the Church, that had rather stand divided than own him in that quality."⁴⁴

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, vol. iv, pp. 447-8.

⁴¹ *ibid.*, vol. v, pp. 106-7.

⁴² *ibid.*, vol. v, p. 124.

⁴³ *ibid.*, vol. v, p. 125.

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 442.

"I am confident that no Church can separate from Rome but must make themselves schismatics before God. . . . I insist on such a principle as may serve to re-unite us with Rome, being well assured that we never can be well united with ourselves otherwise, and that not only the Reformation, but our common Christianity will be lost in the divisions which will never have an end otherwise."⁴⁵

"Where this unity is once broken in pieces and destroyed, and palliating cures are out of date, the offence which is taken at showing the true cure, is imputable to them that cause the fraction, not to him that would see it restored. For what disease was ever cured, without offending the body that had it?"⁴⁶

JOHN BRAMHALL (1593—1663) was appointed Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland at the Restoration. He had previously been Bishop of Londonderry.

The quotations here given from his writings are selected to illustrate an important point that arises in connection with the attitude of most of the Stuart Divines towards Rome. They often make it clear and in very forcible language that they do not accept Rome's attitude in full. But the Roman claims which they reject are not those of spiritual jurisdiction, but those which are based upon feudal and temporal powers. Bramhall will make this sufficiently plain.

"The true controversy is not concerning St. Peter : *we have no formed difference about St. Peter nor about any point of faith, but of interest and profit ; nor with the Church of Rome, but with the court of Rome* : and wherein it doth consist, namely in these questions :—who shall confer English Bishoprics : who shall convocate English synods : who shall receive tenths and firstfruits and oaths of allegiance and fidelity : whether the Pope can make binding laws in England without consent of the King and kingdom : or dispense with English laws at his own pleasure, or call English subjects to Rome without the Prince's leave, or set up legantine courts in England against their wills."⁴⁷ Later, following St. Cyprian, he refers to the primacy of St. Peter as "the beginning of unity."⁴⁸

Again—"Neither King Henry VIII nor any of our legislators did ever endeavour to deprive the Bishop of Rome of the power of the keys, or any part thereof, either the key of order, or the key of jurisdiction : I mean jurisdiction purely spiritual, which hath place only in the inner court of conscience and over such persons as submit willingly : nor did ever challenge or endeavour to assume unto themselves either the key of order or the key of jurisdiction purely spiritual. All which they deprived the Popes

⁴⁵ Quoted by Fitzpatrick, *Life of Dr. Doyle*, vol. ii, p. 527.

⁴⁶ Thorndike, *Works*, vol. ii, p. 6.

⁴⁷ John Bramhall, *Works* (Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology), vol. ii, p. 351.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 372.

of, all which they assumed to themselves, was the external regiment of the Church by coactive power, to be exercised by persons capable of the respective branches of it. This power the Bishops of Rome never had nor could have justly over their subjects, but under them whose subjects they were. And therefore when we meet with the words or the like, that 'no foreign prelate shall exercise any manner of power, jurisdiction, superiority, pre-eminence or privilege, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within the realm,' it is not to be understood of internal or purely spiritual power in the Court of conscience, or the power of the keys (we see the contrary practised every day) : but of external and coactive power in ecclesiastical causes *in foro contentioso*. And that it is and ought to be so understood, I prove clearly by a proviso in one main Act of Parliament, and a canon of the English Church.

First, the proviso is contained in the 'Act for the Exoneration of the King's subjects from all exactions and impositions paid to the See of Rome'—'Provided always this Act, nor anything therein contained, shall be hereafter interpreted or expounded that your Grace, your nobles and subjects intend by the same to decline and vary from the Congregation of Christ's Church in any things concerning the very articles of the Catholic Faith of Christendom, or in any other things declared by the Scriptures and the Word of God necessary for your and their salvations : but only to make an ordinance by policies, necessary and convenient to repress vice, and for good conservation of this realm in peace, unity and tranquillity, from ravine and spoil, insuing much the old ancient customs of this realm in that behalf.' They profess their ordinance is merely political :—what hath a political ordinance to do with power purely spiritual? They seek only to preserve the kingdom 'from ravine and spoil' :—power purely spiritual can commit no ravine and spoil. They follow 'ancient customs of the realm' ;—there was no ancient custom of the realm for abolition or translation of power purely spiritual. . . .

The canon is the 37th canon where we give the King's Majesty the supreme government : 'We do not give our kings either the administration of God's Word or the Sacraments, which the injunctions published lately by Queen Elizabeth do most evidently declare, but only that prerogative which we see to have been always attributed to all godly princes by Himself in Holy Scripture : tthat is, to preserve and constrain all estates and orders committed to their trust by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or civil, in their duties, and restrain contumacious offenders with the civil sword.' *You see the power is political, the sword is political, all is political. Our Kings leave the power of the keys and jurisdiction purely spiritual to those to whom Christ hath left it.*"⁴⁹

Again, "the tenth Act (of Henry VIII) is an Act 'extinguishing the authority of the Bishop of Rome,' or 'extirpating it out

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 392-4.

of this realm'; that is, not the Bishop of Rome's primacy of order, not his 'beginning of unity,' not that respect which is due to him as Bishop of an Apostolic See: if he have not these, it is his own fault, this is not our quarrel: it is so far from it, that we do not envy him any just legacies of Christian Emperors or general Councils: but that which our ancestors did 'extinguish' and endeavour to 'extirpate' out of England was the Pope's external and coactive power over the king's subjects *in foro contentioso*."⁵⁰

In a long passage of which only a summary can be given here, Bramhall enumerates in full the Papal powers which the Church of England does not acknowledge.⁵¹

These are:

1. The Pope's dispensative power—i.e. of the laws of the land.
2. His judiciary power. "I do not mean in controversies of faith when he is in the head of a council—but I mean in points of *meum* and *tuum*."
3. His legislative power—i.e. in dictating the civil laws.
4. His sovereign patronage of the English Church: his power to convocate, exempt from secular payment.
5. His receiving of tenths and firstfruits—"a late encroachment upon the clergy, condemned at the Councils of Constance and Basle."
6. The profits of his courts by licenses, exemptions, etc. "The Pope's own selected Cardinals do cry shame upon it as much as we: and lay down this general rule that 'it is not lawful to make any gain by the exercise of the keys seeing we have the firm word of Christ: Freely ye have received, freely give, etc. . . . For as the use which now prevaieth doth disgrace the Church of Rome and disturbeth Christian people, so the contrary practice would bring much honour to this see, and marvellously edify the people'. (From Recommendations of the Cardinals to Paul III for the Reform of the Church)."

Note that in all this there is not one word against the primacy or spiritual supremacy of the Pope.

GILBERT SHELTON became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1663. In his will he wrote that he died "holding fast the true orthodox profession of the catholique faith of Christ . . . being a true member of His Catholique Church within the communion of a living part thereof, the present Church of England." The evidence which we gain from him is of a different nature, as showing that to his mind there was no doctrinal difference be-

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 398.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 400-2.

tween the Church of England and Rome. Lady Warner writes thus of the instructions she received from Dr. Buck, Chaplain to King Charles II: "I asked him (Dr. Buck) what was the Protestant (i.e. Anglican) Opinion concerning the Sacrament? He told me, that the Body of the Saviour was really there. . . . I asked him about praying to the Saints? He told me 'twas a thing indifferent. . . . I asked him about Confession? He told me 'twas a necessary, and useful thing, and that it was ever practised in the Protestant Church, and that he himself had received confessions, all along the troublesome Times. I asked him about Merit? He told me 'twas as the Roman Catholic Church had Defin'd it; but that Protestants durst not use the word, for fear of offending the Common People, tho' their meaning in the point was the same with the Catholics. He told me, he agreed to all that the Catholic Councils had Decreed, and that what they had not determin'd he meddled not with. He offered to bring me to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Sheldon, to be assur'd that this was not his own Opinion or particular belief, but the whole Protestant Church believ'd the same. He said there was no difference between the Church of Rome and the Church of England, but what might easily be Reconcil'd, and that there was no Dispute about Fundamental Points of Faith. Affirming, that he had lately Discours'd with his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury about these Points, with the same freedom he had done with me; and that the Bishop told him 'Doctor, I am of your Opinion'." ⁵²

Further, Anne Hyde who married James, Duke of York, writes in a paper giving the reasons for her conversion to the Roman Catholic Church: "I spoke severally to two of the Bishops we have in England" (a marginal note says these were Sheldon, and Blanford, Bishop of Worcester) "who both told me there were many things in the Romish Church which (it were very much to be wished) we had kept: as Confession, which was no doubt commanded by God: That praying for the Dead was one of the most ancient things in Christianity: That for their parts, they did it daily, tho' they would not own it. And afterwards pressing one of them very much upon the other points, he told me, That if had been bred a Catholick he would not change his Religion: but that being of another Church (wherein were all things necessary to Salvation) he thought it very ill to give that scandal, as to leave that Church wherein he received his Baptism." ⁵³

⁵² E. Scarisbrick, *The life of the Lady Warner*, third ed. 1696, p. 35. Quoted by Wickham Legg, *English Church Life*, pp. 407-8.

⁵³ Wickham Legg, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

V. THE END OF THE STUARTS.

In 1670, Charles II made an alliance with France against Holland as a step towards the restoration of Catholicism. The Duke of York was of opinion that even among the Anglicans there were many inclined to Catholicism, so that the resistance was not expected to be too formidable. On May 16th of that year the Duchess of Orleans, Charles' sister, arrived in Dover and there the Treaty of Dover was signed. In its second article, the King owned that he was "convinced of the truth of the Catholic Religion," and that he was resolved to declare himself and be reconciled with the Roman Church as soon as the affairs of his kingdom allowed. But the submission was not unconditional, for Colbert in a memoir of June 7th, 1672, speaks of terms which were to be set before the Pope by the Duc d'Estrées. He speaks of "the requests which will be made of the Pope in the King of England's name by the ecclesiastic whom he sends to Rome, among others a request for the Sacrament in both kinds as a favour to the English who desire this concession in order to become converts, and a request for permission to say the Mass in the vulgar tongue, giving me to understand that if the Holy See would so far condescend, most of the Bishops and, following their example, almost all the Protestants of England, would reunite themselves to the Roman Church."⁵⁴ The plan would seem to have followed very largely the proposals of 1663.

With such theologians as have already been quoted and with such an earnest desire of the King for reunion it might have been expected that headway would be made. But the unfortunate House of Stuart had always to pay the price of the iniquities of the House of Tudor. Henry VIII and Elizabeth had forced their subjects against their wills to hostility against Rome, and tradition cannot be lightly overthrown. The force that the Tudors had used to bring about a schism could not be used to repair the breach. Influential as was the party for Reunion, both in Church and State, the prejudices of the common people aroused by the Tudors yet remained. The way to reunion was barred by the hostility of the mob, and the king and his advisers dared proceed no further. Puritanical hatred and suspicion culminated in the so-called Popish Plot in 1678, and in the excitements that

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, p. 406.

followed it was clear that the opportunity of reconciliation had passed. Yet from time to time, private individuals still returned to hopes of unity. Men like John Evelyn, the diarist, and Sir William Godolphin, were not afraid to consider frankly the claims and position of Rome. Samuel Parker, Bishop of Oxford, was regarded as a dangerous Romanizer, and Dr. Thomas Smith, a Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, wrote in 1688: "A Pacific Discourse of the Causes and Remedies of the differences about Religion." But with the passing of the Stuarts, and the establishment of a foreign Protestant King upon the Throne, the history of attempts towards Reunion with Rome passes into another phase. No longer are these attempts official—save one, which will be referred to presently, and that of a very suspicious nature: and no longer are Bishops and prominent statesmen in general the spokesmen of the Reunionist party. The persecutions of William III and his successors drove it largely underground, and the marvel is that any trace of it can be found at all in the century that followed. It is that consideration which gives to the evidence of the following section a very high value.

VI. THE PERIOD OF CATHOLIC PERSECUTION.

This persecution was by means of stringent laws passed against Roman Catholics prohibiting them from taking any public office and making them, in effect, almost outlaws. It was a mental rather than a bodily persecution. But it had the effect of shutting them off from the society of others since their companions even became suspect, and it was this fact which made it almost impossible for Reunionists to speak or write openly in favour of better relations with Rome and in explanation of the real nature of the separation. Those who were known or suspected to have Roman sympathies were watched until it was possible to charge them with some misdemeanour against the law : and therefore the evidence which we seek must of necessity in this period be largely indirect, although there are notable exceptions.

The existence of a Catholic party desiring reunion with Rome is revealed, first, in Protestant pamphlets attacking it. For example, in 1699 there was one entitled "Catholicism without Popery : an essay to render the Church of England a means and a pattern of Union to the Christian world," in which it is stated that ever since 1559 the clergy have been divided in two camps. "One party were for finding out means of reconciliation with Rome and bringing the Pope to terms : "and this," comments the pamphleteer, "is the true difference between the High Church and Low Church (as they are called) to this day."⁵⁵

Again, in 1710, a Whig pamphleteer writes, in "The High Church Mask pull'd off" :

"There appears in these Addresses under consideration a great Zeal for Episcopacy, for the Church of England and its Liturgy, for Primitive and Apostolical Doctrines. It is very well known, notwithstanding all this seeming Favour, who they are, that would confine the Church within their narrow Inclosures ; whose Spirits are very contracted with reference to Protestants, but enlarged towards those of another Communion. . . . Some of them not scrupulous to affirm, That they had rather be Papists than Presbyterians : that an Union with the Popish Gallican Church is preferable to that of Protestant Dissenters."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 411.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, p. 412.

About the same time was published the following masterpiece:—

“ For this, Seditious Spirits in disguise
Swarm in the Church, tho’ they that Church despise :
Loudly they boast her Ancient Rights and Fame
Whilst underhand they play a Popish Game.
The Seed of Loyola with Artful Pains
First fixt this High-Church Poyson in our Veins,
Infecting, too, too many of our Youth,
Who, blindly led, fell from the Cause of Truth.”⁵⁷

This was entitled “The Seditious Insects: or, the Levellers assembled in Convocation.”

Of this period Gilbert Burnet affirms: “There appeared at this time an inclination in many of the clergy, to a nearer approach towards the Church of Rome,”⁵⁸ and Joseph Addison condemns “the Endeavours that have been used to reconcile the Doctrines of two Churches which are in themselves as opposite as Light and Darkness.”⁵⁹

More direct evidence is found in an “Essay towards a proposal for Catholick Communion” by a minister of the Church of England, published in 1704. Some have thought, however, that the author was Joshua Bassett, the Roman Catholic Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. But a reading of the whole Essay, and not merely extracts from it, leaves the strongest impression that it must have been written by an Anglican, and this is commonly supposed to have been William Bassett, Rector of St. Swithin’s, London, who was, in fact, mentioned in connection with it but never denied authorship. It is a significant fact that the Essay aroused so much interest that its price rose from 2/- to £1, in itself a testimony of the attention paid at the time to the question of Reunion with Rome.

There is no space here for a consideration of this very interesting work save its direct references to the Papacy. The author is in the main concerned with the Primacy of which he writes: “Now this whole controversy being reduced to one single question, were it not to be wished that those in whom the authority of our Church is lodged, would, upon the motive of a general peace and healing the wounds of divided Christendom, see if there be any possible accommodation to be found for this point.”⁶⁰ His object is to urge the acceptance of a spiritual supremacy while resisting the encroachments due to a feudal theory of the Temporal Power. Quoting the Collect for St. Peter’s Day in the Book of Common Prayer, he says: “Here St. Peter, among many

⁵⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*, p. 412.

⁵⁹ *The Freeholder, or Political Essays*, No. 28, 1751. Quoted by Wickham Legg, *op. cit.*, p. 413.

⁶⁰ Spinckes, *op. cit.* (see note 2), p. 40. For comments and references as to authorship see Ollard, *op. cit.*, p. 19, note 2; and Slosser, *op. cit.*, p. 102, note 1.

excellent gifts, has his power founded upon those words *Pasce Agnos et Oves*, as being then particularly commissioned to feed the whole flock of Christ. And 'tis in due proportion to this, that all other Bishops and Pastors are to preach." And quoting the Gospel "Tu es Petrus" he says, "Look then into the Collects and Gospels for the other Apostles, and see whether this honour is there given to St. Paul or to St. James, or to any else whom humourists and fanciful men have at any time set up to stand in competition with St. Peter."⁶¹ He cites Thorndike as pleading for a pre-eminence of power, and not only a precedence of rank having been acknowledged originally in the Church of Rome: and quotes the declaration of Grotius: "That there can be no hopes of uniting Protestants except they are first united with that Church which is in the communion with Rome; owning at the same time a kind of authoritative Primacy in the Pope, which is the ground of that Church's being united, and is no occasion of the separation that has been made from it. . . . As many as know Grotius know this of him, that he has always desired that Christians should be again united into one and the same body. He was once of opinion that this might have been begun by uniting Protestants with one another: afterwards he saw that this was impossible, not only because the disposition of the Calvinists is averse to peace, but for that Protestants have no common Church-Government in which they are joined; which are the reasons that the several divisions of the Protestants can never meet into one body, but still more and more divisions will be made. Wherefore Grotius is now absolutely of this judgment, and many others concur with him in the same sentiments, That Protestants cannot be united among themselves, except they are united together with those who are in communion with the See of Rome. Hence it is his wish that the separation which has been made and the causes of separation were taken away. Amongst these causes, the Primacy of the Bishop of Rome, according to the Canons, is not to be reckoned; as Melancthon likewise confesses; who is of opinion, 'That that Primacy is even necessary for preserving of unity.' The same he had in part declared before. 'What is the reason,' says he, 'that those among the Catholicks who differ in opinion still remain in the same Body without breaking communion; and those among the Protestants who disagree cannot do so, however they speak much of brotherly love? Whoever will consider this aright will find how great is the effect of Primacy'."⁶²

There is much more of a similar nature which cannot be quoted now. This is sufficient to indicate the trend of the Essay, upon which a modern Protestant student of Reunion matters, Dr. G. J. Slosser, makes this valuable comment: "The Essay, therefore, has real historical value in that its publication in the first

⁶¹ Spinckes, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

⁶² *ibid.*, pp. 42-3. Grotius (1583—1645) was a Dutch Protestant.

instance, and at different times since, indicates the persistency of a tendency within the Anglican Church to explain away the differences and to surmount the obstacles that are generally regarded as hopelessly preventive of the union of this Church with the Latin Communion."⁶³

In spite of the fact that England was now ruled by a German Protestant King, that the Whigs were in power and the High Church clergy were under suspicion of disloyalty, open negotiations were begun in 1717 between William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the members of the Roman Catholic Church in France. Dupin, the learned historian, wrote to Wake to express his ardent desire for reunion: "We are not in most things so far removed from one another that we may not be mutually reconciled."⁶⁴ With him were the Doctors of the Sorbonne, Cardinal de Noailles, Archbishop of Paris, and the Regent (later Louis XV). Wake replied, "The honour which you give to the Roman Pontiff differs so little, I deem, from that which our sounder Theologians readily grant him, that, on this point, I think, it will not be difficult, on either side, either to agree altogether in the same opinion, or mutually to bear with a dissent of no moment."⁶⁵ But Wake, as the last-quoted phrase reveals, was not really Catholic-minded, and it seems that his intention was to induce the Gallican Party in France, who had been angered by the Bull *Unigenitus*, to break from Rome and form with the Church of England a kind of so-called Old Catholic Church. In any case, the proposals lapsed with the death of Dupin in 1719 and the submission of de Noailles and the Sorbonne to the Pope.

From 1720 for a period of seventy years the blight of Latitudinarianism fell more heavily upon the Church of England, and with yet more ferocious penal laws and a growing fear of a return of the Stuarts any evidence of any real effort for reunion is not to be expected. Yet England did not lack even at this time a succession of Catholic-minded clergy, such as Secker, "the Jesuitical Bishop of Oxford," as Horace Walpole called him; Thomas Wilson, the Bishop of Sodor and Man, who was imprisoned for maintaining Church discipline; Samuel Horsley, Bishop successively of St. David's, Rochester, and St. Asaph, who was mainly responsible for the repeal of many of the penal laws in 1791; and Dr. Thomas Sikes, regarded by Pusey as the precursor of the Oxford Movement. And among the laity we should not forget Dr. Johnson, that man of very fixed opinions, who yet reveals a very equable temper towards the "Papists," and vents his very considerable wrath upon the Presbyterians. Moreover, there are signs that even among Roman Catholics there was a recognition of the fact that there were some pro-Roman Anglicans.

⁶³ *Christian Unity*, p. 103.

⁶⁴ E. B. Pusey, *Eirenicon* No. 1, 1865, p. 17.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 234-5.

In 1724, a correspondent to *Mist's Weekly Journal*, who lived in Rome, wrote in his diary that Pope Innocent XIII was reported to have desired to call an Oecumenical Council for the purpose of promoting the reunion of all the Churches. Whether this was true or not, he allowed a chapel in the house of the Chevalier of St. George to be used for Church of England services, and permitted the burial of Anglicans in Rome in consecrated ground.⁶⁶ In 1729, Dr. Edward Synge, the Archbishop of Tuam, published a tract called *Catholic Christianity: or an Essay towards lessening the numbers of controversies among Christians*, while in 1745, Dom Charles Mathias Chardon, Benedictine of the Congregation of St. Vannes, in his book on the history of the Sacraments, expressed the hope that Anglican Orders might prove to be valid, that there might be one less obstacle to reunion.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Slosser, *op. cit.*, p. 194. Cf. Wickham Legg, *op. cit.*, p. 414, where the action is attributed to Pope Benedict XIII, who succeeded Innocent XIII during the year in question.

⁶⁷ Wickham Legg, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

VII. THE PERIOD OF CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

The change from the existing unhappy state of affairs was brought about, strangely enough, very largely by the French Revolution. The appearance of the *emigrés* in England led to a better understanding of the Roman Catholic position, and the hatred of the English for the revolutionaries led to esteem and admiration for the French Catholics. For the first time for many years Roman Catholics appeared at Court, and French priests and Catholic laity lived peaceably among their Anglican brethren. Even so short a time before as 1780, a slight relaxation of the penal laws had led to the Gordon Riots, yet in 1791 most of those laws were repealed without objection. And, as has always been the case, the ending of Catholic persecution resulted in an enkindling of a desire for reunion or, perhaps it would be truer to say, in the expression of those desires which had been kept secret.

Without entering into the many minor expressions of such desire we must confine ourselves now to those of most importance.

First among these is a charge issued to his clergy by Dr. Shute Barrington, Bishop of Durham, in 1811, on *The grounds of Union between the Churches of England and Rome considered*. This Bishop was the son of a peer and twice married, and was near the end of a long episcopal reign of fifty-seven years. At the outbreak of the French Revolution he had attributed it to Popery and spoke severely of the Roman Catholic religion. Yet in 1811, he says :

“There appears to me to be in the circumstances of Europe, better ground for a successful issue to a dispassionate investigation of the differences which separate the two Churches of England and of Rome than at any former period. . . . If, I say, by persevering in a spirit of truth and charity we could bring the Roman Catholics to see these most important subjects in the same light that the Catholics of the Church of England do, a very auspicious opening would be made for that long-desired measure of CATHOLIC UNION, which formerly engaged the talents and anxious wishes of some of the best and ablest members of both Communions. And what public duty of greater magnitude can present itself to us, than the restoration of peace and union to the Church by the reconciliation of two so large portions of it as the Churches of England and Rome? If I should

live to see a foundation for such union well laid and happily begun which we have reason to hope is not very remote, with what joy and consolation would it illumine the last hours of a long life ! With what heartfelt pleasure should I use the rapturous language of good old Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace'.'⁶⁸

Such a statement from a " moderate, average prelate " of George III's reign is nothing less than startling, even following upon the history which we have been considering. We may well imagine what a bombshell it must have been to most of his clergy. Would that we might have such shocks from moderate prelates of to-day !

In 1818, the Rev. Samuel Wix, F.R.S., F.S.A., Hospitaller of St. Bartholomew's, a High Churchman, urged in a tract the "expediency of a Council of the Church of England and the Church of Rome being holden with a view to accommodate religious differences." In the preface he states that "the Roman Catholics, it is believed, are greatly misunderstood and cruelly caluminated," and he calls the British and Foreign Bible Society "the grand modern engine of religious Schism and Insubordination."⁶⁹ Again, this is hardly in line with the ideas we have generally received about the Churchmanship of the early 19th century. Wix had previously published (in 1808) a *Commentary on the 39 Articles* "affectionately intended to promote religious Peace and Unity."

The final event to be recorded in this survey is perhaps the most unexpected of all. It concerns a proposal for reunion made by a Roman Catholic Bishop and a response by an Anglican Bishop in Ireland. In 1824, Dr. Doyle, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, wrote a letter suggesting a conference of "Protestant and Catholic Divines of learning and a conciliatory character summoned by the Crown to ascertain the points of agreement and difference." This letter was addressed to Mr. Robinson (afterwards Lord Ripon), the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who the Bishop believed had made a speech in the House of Commons advocating the union of the Churches in Ireland. Actually this was an error, for the speech in question was, according to Hansard, made by a Mr. Robertson. In his letter Dr. Doyle writes :

"This union is not so difficult as appears to many. It is not difficult : for in the discussions which were held and the correspondence which occurred on this subject early in the last century, as well as that in which Archbishop Tillotson (Wake?) was engaged, as the others which were carried on between Bossuet and Leibnitz, it appeared that the points of agreement between the Churches were numerous ; those on which the parties hesitated

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 415.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, p. 418. Samuel Wix, *Reflections concerning the expediency of a Council of the Church of England and the Church of Rome being holden with a view to accommodate Religious Differences.*

few, and apparently not the most important. The effort which was then made was not attended with success: but its failure was owing more to princes than priests; more to State policy, than a difference of belief. The chief points to be discussed are, the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures, Faith, Justification, the Mass, the Sacraments, the authority of Tradition, of Councils, of the Pope, the Celibacy of the Clergy, Language of the Liturgy, Invocation of Saints, Respect for Images, Prayers for the Dead. *On most of these, it appears to me that there is no essential difference between the Catholics and the Protestants.* The existing diversity of opinion arises in most cases from certain forms of words, which admit of satisfactory explanation, or from the ignorance or misconceptions which ancient prejudice and ill-will produce and strengthen: but which could be removed."⁷⁰

Of this letter, H. N. Oxenham writes: "There is reason to believe that the Bishop was not speaking without the tacit concurrence at least of the Holy See."⁷¹ But it is sad to have to record the fact that the Anglican authorities made no formal reply to this advance, and the proposal lapsed. Yet in Ireland it was not without effect. John Jebb, the Anglican Bishop of Limerick, so far responded to Dr. Doyle's spirit that we are told he "on one occasion addressed the people after Mass from the Altar of the Roman Catholic Church at Manoe, when he was heard with breathless attention."⁷²

It is worthy of note also that it was just about this time that Dr. Murray, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Dublin from 1823 to 1852, wrote to Mr. Aeneas MacDonnell that significant and often quoted statement: "Were Church of England people true to the principles laid down in their Prayer Book, the doctrinal differences, which appear considerable but are not, would soon be removed."⁷³

The deaths of Jebb in 1833 and of Doyle in 1834 brought these approaches in Ireland to an end, but by this time most of the remaining disabilities of Roman Catholics in England had been removed by the Catholic Emancipation Bill of 1829, and so the way was at last clear for that mighty development of the Reunionist spirit necessarily engendered by the quickening of Catholic life in the Church of England through the Oxford Movement.

⁷⁰ William Palmer, *Treatise on the Church of Christ*, 2nd ed., 1839, vol. i, p. 232, note x.

⁷¹ H. N. Oxenham, *Introduction to An Eirenicon of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 42: quoted in S. L. Ollard, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁷² Ollard, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁷³ Oxenham, *op. cit.*, p. 69; quoted in S. L. Ollard, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

VIII. CONCLUSION.

This history of efforts towards and hopes of Reunion with Rome from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries is necessary to the true understanding of the Oxford Movement. It reveals that such hopes are not of recent origin, nor simply a growth of the last century, but are inherent in the life of the Anglican Communion. From the time of the separation we may find in almost every decade men of position and learning who have looked forward with longing for a return to that Rock from which we are hewn.

In this continuity of desire we may perhaps see an indication of the part which, we Anglicans firmly believe, the Church of England still plays in the life of the Universal Church. Just as we believe her to have retained the marks of Catholicity and Apostolicity through her stormy times and even periods of deadness, so also we find to have been kept alive in her—just because of her Catholicity, I would say—the spirit and desire for unity.

We have seen the outward expressions of that desire varying in volume according to the outward circumstances of her life and the forces exerted by the State. The Oxford Movement at once sprang into being when anti-Catholic pressure was removed, drawing its life from the spirit of Reunionists of the past. And, as in its gradual advance and development the Church has been more and more freed from the shackles of the State, that desire for Reunion with Rome has become more widespread and more vocal. The Oxford Movement, in brief, has its roots in desire for the visible unity of the Church: and, by the grace and Will of God, it will have its end in the accomplishment of that Divine Ideal.



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